TRANCERS

Written

By

Robert Amante

First Draft June 1984

Registered WGAW
c 1984

Empire Pictures
948 N. Fairfax Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90046
(213) 656-6610

A title appears superimposed over a swirling grey fog:

ANGEL CITY, 2247

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT- DINER- NIGHT-FOG

Heavy mist hangs about the silver tube of a roadside diner. Pulsing through the fog is a red neon sign- "MOM'S No.3".

A bank of yellow lights appear, followed by the sound of a strangly whirring engine. Then, the chromed prow of an oddly modified automobile emerges from the fog-shrouded highway.

Pieced together from 20th Century wrecks, the car resembles a mutated 1959 Plymouth. The trunk lid between the soaring tail fins has been removed to accommodate an eccentric fuel system. A contraption resembling a trio of small boilers sit in the open trunk, with pipes and tubes disappearing into the vehicle's body.

The auto stops in front of the diner. The engine winds down and the headlights blink off. The car door opens. JACK DETH steps out.

JACK is tall, and strongly built. He removes his visored helmet and tosses it onto the car seat. JACK'S hair is slicked straight back. A deep scar runs from the corner of his eye down through the heavy stubble on his chin. A small platinum loop dangles from his ear.

JACK wears a grey, fog-stained ankle-length overcoat, like a cattleman's duster. Beneath the open coat can be glimpsed a brown suit. The suitcoat is belted at the waist, and its shoulders are heavily padded.

JACK reaches into the car and takes a tiny radio from the dashboard.

JACK
(into radio)
This is Special Op Nine...location, third quadrant, delta zone...uh...

He looks over his shoulder. A short distance up the highway is a glowing pink sign atop a pole. The sign reads "DZ 11-b".

JACK
(cont)
Eleven beta. Suspected trancer, code white.

An emotionless automated voice responds from the speaker.

DISPATCHER
(over radio)
Negative. Negative. Report for Shuttle bay Customs duty. Any other action violates procedure. Repeat, any other action violates procedure.

Ignoring the DISPATCHER, JACK tosses the radio on the seat and starts up the steps to the diner.

The wind momentarily brushes back his overcoat, revealing a tarnished brass pistol stapped to his thigh.

INT- DINER- NIGHT

Jack enters through the brushed aluminum door. Fog presses against the row of windows lining the diner's shell. He looks down the long counter, where a lone customer is ordering from MOM, a sweet-faced elderly woman.

The burly customer wears an ultra baggy, grease-stained jumpsuit and cap. A patch on the shoulder displays a monorail train ringed by the words "ANGEL CITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY". An ivory loop hangs from the man's nostrils, and stitched over his breast pocket is the name "BULL".

BULL
Gimme a kelp steak medium...uh, your pods deep-fried?

MOM
Sure are, honey.

BULL
Okay, side o' pods and a large Coke, no ice.

MOM
Comin' up.

She spots JACK and moves down the counter.

MOM
What'll you have, mister?

JACK
Coffee.

MOM
The real stuff? Gonna cost you.

JACK
I deserve it. And I want milk, not that soy crap.

MOM
Comin' up.

JACK watches her disappear into the back room, then walks slowly down the diner towards BULL, who is reading a newspaper.

JACK
'Evening, citizen.

BULL looks JACK over and returns to his newspaper.

JACK takes a small leather wallet from his pocket. He flaps it open to display a round pewter badge. The badge depicts the silhouette of an angel in a ring. About the ring is "A.C.P.D.".

JACK
(cont)
Jack Deth, Angel City P.D. May I see your stats?

BULL nervously takes out a plastic laminated I.D. card. He hands it to JACK.

BULL
What'd I do?

Ignoring him, JACK examinines the stat card, then returns it.

JACK
Under Section 7 of the penal code, the Council authorizes me to administer a Trancer Suspect Examination.

BULL
You can't give me a T.S.E. without a warrant.

JACK draws his brass pistol.

JACK
I got your warrant right here.

He puts the barrel of the gun an inch from BULL'S nose ring.

BULL
(trembling)
Okay...okay, I won't make trouble.

JACK
Hold out your left arm.

As BULL complies, JACK pulls a T.S.E. bracelet from his pocket. The bracelet is a clear plastic band, hinged in the middle.

BULL
I got nothin' to hide.

JACK clamps the bracelet on BULL'S thick wrist. After a moment, the band throbs once with a deep purple color.

JACK
Negative? If it's not you, then it's gotta be-

BULL sees something behind JACK.

BULL
Look out!

JACK instinctively jumps aside as a huge meat cleaver slams deep into the wooden counter.

JACK turns to see MOM trying to yank the cleaver free. MOM'S features have expanded to grotesque proportions, as if the bones beneath her skin have been monstrously reshaped. She is sweating profusely, her hair in limp strands. The old woman's eyes are wild.

JACK swings his gun up.

BULL throws a rough bear hug around JACK.

BULL
You can't singe an old lady!

JACK throws him off. BULL flies back, crashing into a table.

JACK
You blind? She's a trancer!

JACK turns back just as the tranced old woman leaps upon him. Screaming like a banshee, she grabs his gun arm and sinks her teeth into his wrist.

JACK cries out in pain.

JACK
(to BULL)
Help me, dammit!

BULL backs away in terror, turns and darts out the door.

JACK shakes his arm, desperately trying to dislodge the trancer. Suddenly he jerks his wrist loose.

The jade-handled pistol flies from his grasp and sails over the counter. The gun lands in a tall pot of boiling porridge.

JACK pushes the trancer off and tries to stand. Before he can regain his balance, the crazed old woman grabs up a pair of forks. One in each hand she lunges for JACK.

EXT- DINER- NIGHT-FOG

Outside the diner, BULL runs up to a grey metal box sitting on a short post. Set in the top of the box is a glass lens, and on its front is painted a symbol similar to that on JACK'S badge. A small lever projects from the side of the box.

As the sounds of the fight inside the diner continue in the background, BULL pulls the lever.

Instantly a luminous blue beam streaks out from the lens atop the box. As the bright beacon flashes high into the fog-draped sky, BULL runs off down the highway.

INT- DINER- NIGHT

The strobing police beacon casts an eerie glow through the windows, bathing JACK and the trancer in blue and white pulses as they struggle behind the counter.

MOM grabs a skillet of hot grease from the stove. She heaves it at JACK, who ducks behind an ice-maker.

Then, the trancer picks up the kettle of bubbling porridge. She throws the kettle over the icemaker, spattering JACK with the hot porridge.

JACK quickly wipes off the steaming gruel as MOM begins pulling knives from a rack above the stove.

A knife flies by JACK'S head, nearly shaving off an ear. Then, he spies his pistol, lying in a puddle of porridge spilling from the overturned kettle.

JACK reaches for the gun, then immediately drops it as the hot metal burns his hand.

A paring knife flies in, sinking into JACK'S thigh. He grunts in pain. With great effort he picks up the gun and drops it into the ice-maker's bin.

JACK pulls the knife from his leg and flings it back at MOM. The trancer ducks aside, seizes a large chef's knife, and starts towards JACK.

JACK shoves his hand into the bin and retreives his weapon from the ice.

Tightly gripping the cooled pistol, JACK fires twice at the advancing woman.

A pair of green energy bolts slam into the trancer, flinging her against the far wall in a dead heap.

JACK slowly pulls himself up. He crosses warily to the body, limping slightly.

Satisfied that the trancer is dead, he holsters his brass pistol. He picks up MOM'S body, carries it under one arm, like a sack of laundry, and goes out the door.

START

EXT- DINER- NIGHT-FOG

JACK pauses on the diner's porch. He casually tosses the trancer's body to the ground.

As the body hits the dirt, MOM'S feautures revert to normal. Then, she disappears in a red flash, leaving a scorched outline, like a permanent shadow.

Suddenly, the blue police beacon blinks out. A moment later JACK hears the high-pitched whine of a descending police floater. He looks up over the top of the diner as a bank of red and blue lights lower from the mist. Below the spinning lights is the glowing emblem of the Angel City Police Department- the winged angel flying through a ring.

As the floater touches down behind the diner, JACK hurries off towards his car.

JACK opens the car door as two figures emerge from the fog- LT. MCNULTY and a uniformed officer. MCNULTY is garbed in a dark double-breasted suit with wide shoulders, a green Fedora, and a long scarf of green silk. He is fifty, with a wide face and a gut to match. The officer wears the standard A.C.P.D. uniform- dark grey jumpsuit with a blue cap.

MCNULTY
Not so fast.

JACK
I'm not in the mood, McNulty.

JACK starts to enter the car. MCNULTY reaches over and slams the door, leaving JACK standing beside the auto.

MCNULTY
Yeah? Well, I'm not in the mood for troopers who dodge their assignments.

JACK
Shuttle pad duty's for squids. I've got better things to do.

MCNULTY
Trancer hunting's out of bounds, and you know it. The Department's had a bellyfull of your one-man crusade.

JACK
Whistler may be dead, but someone's got to mop up the strays. I singed one just now.
(nodding towards diner)
The scorch is by the door.

JACK climbs into the car and closes the door. MCNULTY leans in the window.

MCNULTY
It's straight from the Captain, Jack. You'll take your assignments...or you'll take a hike.

JACK looks at MCNULTY for a moment. Then, he reaches into his coat for his badge.

He tosses the pewter emblem out the window, pulls on his helmet, then speeds off.

The uniformed officer picks the badge from the dirt and brushes it off.

MCNULTY takes JACK'S badge from the officer.

MCNULTY
He was a good cop, 'til a trancer killed his wife. Come on, let's hit the sky.

They walk off in the direction of the floater.

EXT- BEACH- DAY

A stretch of beach is lined with barbed wire. A sign warns:

CORPS OF ENGINEERS
LOST ANGELES
Enter at own risk

Far on the misty horizon, the broken spires of a submerged city jut from the water.

Out of the waves walks JACK DETH. On his back are a series of small orange cannisters, attached by a thin tube to a brass and crystal diving mask over his eyes and mouth. In his hand is a mesh bag.

He pulls off the mask as he crosses the beach to where a towel waits on a mat of silvery fabric.

JACK slips off the diving gear, then opens the mesh bag and dumps the contents on the mat.

Out tumble items salvaged from the sunken metropolis- a Sunset Blvd. street sign, a plastic Dodgers batting helmet, a "Star Wars" toy spaceship, and a set of auto hubcaps.

JACK sits on the mat. Using the point of his knife, he begins picking barnacles from the Sunset Blvd sign. A pair of shoes shoes appear in the sand beside him.

MCNULTY
Figured I'd find you out here.

JACK looks up at MCNULTY. Behind the policeman are two Guardsmen of the Executive Council. They are uniformed in black jumpsuits and caps, highlighted by gold piping and insignia.

JACK glances at the Guardsmen, then turns his attention back to scraping barnacles.

MCNULTY
(cont)
You see the Guardsmen- on your feet, trooper.

JACK laughs.

JACK
Ex-trooper. I don't have to get up for anyone.

One of the Guardsmen steps forward and officiously profers a small black tube.

JACK
(cont)
What's this?

MCNULTY
A summons from the Council.

Without accepting the tube, JACK stands and pulls on his diving gear. He starts down the beach to the waterline.

The Guardsmen unsnap the holster flaps on their gunbelts.

MCNULTY
(cont)
Let me talk to him.

He follows JACK down the beach as the Guardsmen wait impatiently.

MCNULTY
(cont)
Jack! You can't ignore that summons! It's the highest honor there is!

JACK
I think I found the old Chinese Theater. I want another look before the storm comes in.

JACK starts into the waves. MCNULTY wades in after him, pleading, until the water laps at his knees.

MCNULTY
The Council needs you!

JACK
Fuck 'em.

JACK dives into the surf. MCNULTY yells after him.

MCNULTY
Whistler's alive!

After a moment JACK surfaces. He pulls his mask up.

JACK
Alive? Where?

EXT- COUNCIL BUNKER- DAY-FOG

From the dry floor of an abandoned reservoir, the grey stained slope of a dam climbs into the omnipresent fog. Rusted iron railings line the dam's crest; thick pale walls and stark crumbling blockhouses resemble the parapets of an antique castle.

An empty water channel tunnels deep into the base of the dam. The high mouth of the passage is protected by iron bars. Several Guardsmen in black jumpsuits stand watchfully near the entrance, weapons ready. Before the channel mouth is a low wall of sandbags protecting a plasma disrupter gun on a tripod. Above the tunnel are tarnished bronze letters, reading:

HIGH COUNCIL
WESTERN TERRITORIES

JACK, in his suit and overcoat, is escorted to the tunnel mouth by MCNULTY and the pair of Council Guardsmen. They halt at the entrance.

MCNULTY
I'm not cleared to go any further.
You behave yourself in there.

JACK
Don't get pimpy with me, McNulty.

JACK turns and starts into the tunnel.

MCNULTY
You forgot something, smart guy.

He holds out JACK'S badge. JACK looks at it a moment, then snatches the sheild with near contempt.

Accompanied by the two Guardsmen, JACK enters the dark tunnel.

STOP

INT- COUNCIL CHAMBER- DAY

The Chamber is high-ceilinged and dimly lit. In the center of the room is a dais, on which rest a long marble table and three chairs. One of the chairs is empty; a black cloth is draped across it. The remaining chairs are occupied by two distinguished elderly gentlemen, ASHE and SPENSER. Both wear dark, heavily padded suits, and each has his hair slicked.

The Chamber doors swing open silently, and JACK enters.

ASHE
Trooper Deth. Welcome. My name is Ashe. The gentleman beside me is Chairman Spenser.

SPENSER
(nods a greeting)
Trooper.

JACK approaches the dais, noting the empty chair.

JACK
I thought there were three of you.

SPENSER
Van Zandt was murdered, four days ago...by Martin Whistler.

JACK
Then it's true, Whistler's alive?

ASHE
Very much so. And he intends to kill us, as well.

JACK
But, how could he get to you? This joint's a fortress.

ASHE laughs bitterly.

ASHE
It might as well be made of paper!

JACK
I don't follow...where is Whistler?

SPENSER
In Los Angeles.

JACK
No problem. We get the submarine fleet and blow him out of the water.

ASHE
Whistler is not in the sunken ruins. He's fled to the thriving metropolis as it existed nearly two hundred years ago.

JACK
How can you be sure he's gone down the line?

SPENSER holds up a square of thin red plastic. He inserts the red message card into the small electronic Bell and Howell decoder on the table. After a moment, a projection beams from the decoder and a red-toned, translucent image takes shape in the air beside JACK.

The image resolves into the life-sized ghostly figure of MARTIN WHISTLER. WHISTLER is a tall, sharp featured man with intense eyes. His jet black hair falls across one shoulder in a long braid. Strange abstract designs are tattooed on his cheeks and brow. His garb is oddly pirate-like, consisting of tall boots, a belted tunic and a cloak.

WHISTLER'S IMAGE
Greetings to the Council. As you may have gathered, I survived the pathetic trap set by Trooper Deth on Mekon Seven. For twelve long years, you've hunted my disciples, like dogs! Now, my day of vengeance has come. I have synthesized your time drug, and in a moment shall retreat down the dark corridor of history. One by one, your ancestors will be murdered- and you, their progeny, will cease to exist. Then shall I return, join my legion, and claim the seat of power for my own.
(blowing them a kiss)
Adeiu!

The image fades out.

SPENSER grips the back of Van Zandt's empty chair.

SPENSER
I was with Van Zandt when it happened. The man simply...vaporized. As did his poor children, and grandchildren.

JACK
How do you know Whistler's location?

ASHE
We monitored a line disruption in Los Angeles, December, 1985. Van Zandt, Spenser, and I all had ancestors in the city then.

SPENSER
As did Whistler...and yourself, of course.

JACK
Me?

ASHE
Yes. Philip Dethton, a journalist. You'll be transfered to his body, allowing you to search for Whistler.

JACK
There were millions of people in L.A.!

SPENSER
We traced Whistler's ancestral line. He's using the body of a man named Wiesling.

ASHE
There is one minor complication. Wiesling is a police detective.

JACK
You call that minor?

INT- TIME LAB- DAY

SPENSER and ASHE lead JACK into a small white room. The sterile room is empty but for a technician, RAINES, and a pair chrome tables. Over one table is stretched a sort of clear inflated bubble of pliable plastic, attached by cables to a console.

Inside the bubble, surrounded by a pale green gas, lies the inert body of a man.

RAINES crosses to them. She is a handsome woman in her middle thirties. Her hair is cropped at a length only slightly longer than a crewcut, but on her the effect is striking.

ASHE
Trooper Deth, this is Engineer Raines.

JACK
Engineer, huh? When did you get promoted, Ruth?

RAINES
Ages ago.

ASHE
She'll be administering the transfer serum.

JACK
(to RAINES)
<u>You'll</u> be in charge of my bones while I'm gone?

RAINES
Don't worry, Jack, I don't hold a grudge.

She leads JACK to the bubble-topped table.

RAINES
We'll preserve your body in a suspension bubble, like this one here.

JACK peers through the billowing plastic. He is surprised to recognize the form within.

JACK
Whistler.

RAINES
It's just a shell, really. His consciousness is in 1985.

JACK
Right. But how did you get hold of the body?

ASHE
Our Security Forces found it hidden in the desert. We're keeping it for the trial.

JACK
Trial? You don't want Whistler singed?

SPENSER
No, no! You're to capture Whistler, and inject him with the serum antidote. His mind will return to Angel City, and he'll stand before the High Court.

JACK shakes his head and starts for the door.

JACK
If you think I'm bringing that scum up the line for a trial, you've got the wrong trooper.

ASHE
Unless you stop Whistler, everything the Council has accomplished in the last forty years will come to nothing! We'll be plunged into the same chaos that followed the Great Quake! You're our only hope.

JACK
Then it's on my terms.

Before the others can react, JACK whips his brass pistol from its holster. There are three green flashes as energy bolts tear through WHISTLER'S suspension bubble. The destroyed body and its collapsed cocoon are blown off the table in a ball of smoke and sparks.

SPENSER
My God! What have you done?

RAINES
(to JACK)
You haven't changed a bit.

JACK
Don't worry. Justice will be served.

SPENSER
(to ASHE)
He's insane! You were wrong to insist on a trooper!

ASHE
We have no choice.

He crosses to JACK and extends his hand.

ASHE
(cont)
Such conspicuous displays of firepower will not be tolerated. Give me your weapon.

JACK
I don't go anywhere without a rod.

ASHE
Fortunately, we can transfer inorganic material intact. Raines?

RAINES places a metallic blue box on the table beside JACK. She pulls up the lid and withdraws a 20th Century revolver.

RAINES
This is a .38 Police Special, a traditional firearm of the era.

Interested, JACK puts down his blaster and takes the revolver.

JACK
I've got one in my collection, but it's all rusted out.

He admires the weapon, spinning it on his finger.

RAINES
Careful! That grip has been modified.

She snatches the gun from JACK. RAINES slides the grips to one side. Hidden in the hollow gun butt are two small injectors.

RAINES
(cont)
Two injectors of antidote- one for you, one for Whistler.

She closes the grips and replaces the .38 in the box. She takes out an item resembling a digital wristwatch.

JACK
I've got an old watch.

RAINES
Not like this one. If you depress this knob, you'll gain a "long second".

JACK
A what?

RAINES
One second stretched to ten, for the person holding the device. While you have complete freedom of movement, the rest of the world will appear stopped.

JACK
I could've used this on our last date. Let's try it.

RAINES
No, it has a single-use generator.

ASHE
We haven't time to waste here- prepare the injection.

As RAINES removes an injector from a wall cabinet, SPENSER waves a faded photograph of a muscular young man in JACK'S face.

SPENSER
This is my ancestor- his name and location are written on the back. Protect him- please!

SPENSER places the photo in the metal box.

RAINES
Lie on the table, trooper.

JACK complies as RAINES readies the injection.

JACK
(to ASHE)
What about your ancestor?

ASHE shows JACK a worn baseball card depicting a pitcher from the L.A. Angels' 1963 team.

JACK
(reading card)
"Hap" Ashby, 1963 Angels? What the hell is this?

ASHE
I'm afraid that's the best I could do. We couldn't pinpoint his exact location. All I know is that he was in Los Angeles in 1985.

JACK
Swell.

RAINES applies the injector to the side of JACK'S neck.

RAINES
You'll just feel a little pressure...

She presses the release plunger. JACK cries out in pain.

JACK
Ahhhh-

INT- DETHTON'S BATHROOM- DAY

Philip Dethton stands at the sink in his bathroom, traces of shaving cream on his face. He is wearing a bathrobe over trousers and T-shirt. A towel is slung over his shoulder. He closely resembles his descendant, JACK DETH. But, Philip's hair is grey rather than brown, and he has no scar.

Philip raises his towel to wipe his face. Then, his body jerks involuntarily as JACK DETH'S consciousness floods into him.

JACK
(cont)
-aaaaah!

Stunned, JACK stares into the mirror, touching his new face in disbelief.

From the adjoining bedroom, a woman's voice calls into the bathroom.

LEENA
(o.s.)
Phil? You okay in there?

JACK is momentarily startled.

JACK
Uh...yeah, I'm fine.

He crosses to the window and pushes open the frosted pane of glass.

Below him is spread the city of Los Angeles, 1985- the way he always dreamed it would look.

JACK smiles deliriously.

A momentary flood of light flashes in the bathroom. Blinking, JACK turns to find the blue metallic box sitting on the counter.

He opens the box to check the contents. The .38, the "long second" watch and the two photographs are there. He straps on the watch, then places the other items in the pocket of his robe.

LEENA
(o.s.)
Hey, it's eight-thirty, I'll be late for work.

Taking a deep breath, JACK opens the door, ready to face the unknown...

INT- BEDROOM- DAY

The bedroom beyond is spacious and nicely furnished. Standing by the bed is a shockingly beautiful nineteen year old woman.

LEENA is partially dressed in a pair of green tights and low red suede boots. A green leotard is rolled down around her waist. The cut of her hair is unusual yet attractive, highlighted by a streak of pale blue.

As JACK enters, LEENA smiles. She pulls the leotard straps up over her smooth shoulders.

LEENA
(cont)
We'll have to hurry, don't you think?

JACK
Uh...
(noting bathrobe)
Yeah, right.

He crosses to a door and pulls it open. The contents spill out- tennis racket, old shoes, suitcases. A bowling ball thuds to the floor and rolls across the carpet.

JACK
(cont)
(under his breath)
You're a real slob, Phil.

LEENA
What?

JACK
Uh, this closet's really filled.

JACK crosses to another door and opens it cautiously. He is relieved to find a large walk-in closet with built-in dressers. JACK disappears into the closet.

LEENA removes a red jumper trimmed with white fur from her gym bag. She pulls the jumper over her leotard.

LEENA
Did you mean what you said last night?

INT- CLOSET- DAY

JACK looks askance at a rack of gaudily colored shirts and selects a plain white one. He pulls the shirt on.

JACK
Oh, sure...uh, what <u>did</u> I say?

LEENA appears in the doorway.

LEENA
Come on, Phil! You said that making love with me was like the ethereal union of two lost souls.

JACK stares appreciatively at her lithesome form.

JACK
I'll bet it was.

LEENA
Huh?

JACK
I mean, lost souls, yeah.

She grins at him and goes back into the bedroom.

JACK slides a dresser drawer open. The drawer is crammed with the photos of lovely women, some framed. Several of the portraits are inscribed.

JACK tosses the photo back into the drawer.

JACK
(cont)
This guy's a shark.

INT- BEDROOM- DAY

LEENA is pinning a small hat to her hair, a red peaked cap with a jingle bell on the end. JACK comes from the closet, knotting a tie around his neck.

She looks at herself in the mirror and frowns, fussing with the cap.

LEENA
Damn it! I can't wait til Christmas is over so I can dump this stupid outfit.

JACK studies the address on the back of the faded photo given to him by SPENSER.

JACK
Do you know where...
(reading)
Cah-hun-ja Boulevard is?

LEENA
Cah-what?

JACK
(reading)
C-A-H-U-E-N-

LEENA
Cahuenga? It's two blocks from here! Quit screwing around, you promised to get me to work on time.

LEENA goes to the bed to fetch her purse.

JACK
Just let me get a coat.

He starts for the walk-in closet, then sees an old, balled up trenchcoat lying on the floor among the spilled flotsom from the first closet. He shakes out the coat and puts it on.

LEENA
You're wearing that?

JACK
I like it.

JACK catches a glimpse of himself in the mirror over the dresser. He stops, stares at his reflection and runs his fingers through his hair.

LEENA
Phil, if I'm late, I'll lose my job!

Ignoring her, JACK paws through the deodorants and bottles of cologne on Dethton's dresser. Beside a blowdrier, JACK finds a tube of hair gel.

As LEENA looks on in amazement, JACK squeezes out half the tube onto his palm and slops it onto his hair.

He grabs up a comb and slicks back his hair.

LEENA
(aghast)
What are you doing?

JACK
Dry hair's for squids.

JACK wipes his hands off on one of Phil's shirts hanging from the corner of the mirror.

JACK heads for the bedroom door.

JACK
Well, let's go.

LEENA follows him out.

LEENA
You know, you seemed like an okay guy last night. But I guess you're as crazy as the rest of 'em.

EXT- SHOPPING MALL- DAY

The first customers of the day walk into the main entrance of a large modern shopping mall. Christmas decorations festoon the sides of the structure, and holiday music is piped through speakers hung by the entrance.

JACK whips Dethton's black 1957 T-Bird convertible into the parking lot. LEENA grips the dashboard as he screeches to a stop in a space by the entrance.

JACK
I love this car!

LEENA glares at him as she tries to rearrange her wind-blown hair.

LEENA
(terse)
I guess so.

She gets out of the car, slams the door, and stalks off towards the mall entrance.

JACK
Hey, wait a minute!

LEENA ignores him. JACK vaults the car door and rushes after her. He catches up and walks beside her.

JACK
(cont)
Am I gonna see you tonight?

She glances at him in amazement.

LEENA
Wake up, Phil.

She strides through the entrance, JACK dogging her footsteps.

INT- SHOPPING MALL- DAY

LEENA walks quickly down the mall court, towards the Santa Claus display in the center.

JACK
What did I do wrong?

LEENA
I don't know... maybe you're schizo or something.

JACK
What do you mean?

LEENA stops abruptly and turns to face JACK.

LEENA
Last night you said you grew up in L.A. Today you can't find Cahuenga Boulevard. You put that shit in your hair, and you can't even remember my name!

At the Santa Claus display, a large matron dressed like MRS. CLAUS calls.

MRS. CLAUS
Leena!

LEENA turns instinctively.

MRS. CLAUS
(cont)
Come on, the kid's are waiting!

JACK
(grinning)
Leena. Your name's Leena.

LEENA
Did I give you my phone number?

JACK
Uh, no...

LEENA
Thank God.

She hurries over to the display.

JACK puts his hands deep into the pockets of his rumpled trenchcoat. He watches LEENA walk off.

INT- "NORTH POLE"- DAY

A line of impatient children and parents ends at a cut-out of a gingerbread house, in front of which, on a red velvet throne, sits a man in a Santa suit, a child in his lap. Around the house are banks of fake snow studded with large aluminum candy canes, gaily wrapped presents, plastic elves and reindeer. A sign stuck in the "snow" reads "NORTH POLE". A card on an easel offers:

PHOTO WITH SANTA
$4.00

A portrait camera on a tripod waits before the house- as does an irate MRS. CLAUS.

MRS. CLAUS
Where have you been? All these people want pictures!

LEENA
Sorry.

She sets down her gym bag and prepares the camera. SANTA finishes with the child on his lap and motions for MRS. CLAUS to send the next KID, a seven year old boy.

MRS. CLAUS
(to KID)
(brightly)
Santa will see you now, young man.

The boy's mother drags him towards SANTA'S throne. The KID stares as they pass LEENA, who struggles to load the camera.

KID
How come you got blue hair?

LEENA
(exasperated)
'Cause it's cold at the North Pole!

MRS. CLAUS glares at LEENA.

MRS. CLAUS
Pull your cap down!

LEENA forlornly tugs at the hat, trying to hide the blue streak.

The KID climbs into SANTA'S lap.

SANTA
Ho, ho, ho! And what can Santa bring you for Christmas?

KID
Uh...
(reads from a list)
I wanna G.I. Joe Command Headquarters, Skeletor with Battle Armor, Jabba the Hutt, I want John Doe the Mandroid and...

As LEENA snaps the photo, JACK suddenly appears beside her.

JACK
Leena, I have to talk to you.

LEENA
Not now, okay?

JACK
Listen, I'm not crazy. I just need your help.

SANTA is staring intently at JACK and LEENA, his face damp with sweat.

KID
...and a Go-Bot watch, and new slot cars 'cause my stupid sister busted my old one, and...hey, Santa!

SANTA'S face is throbbing beneath the false beard and wig. His eyes are hollow and gaze fixidly at JACK.

KID
(cont)
Santa, are you listening?

SANTA suddenly rises from his throne, lifting the startled child.

KID
(cont)
Hey!

As the boy's mother looks on in alarm, SANTA harmlessly dumps the KID in a drift of fake snow. SANTA stalks towards JACK and LEENA, death in his eyes.

MRS. CLAUS
What's wrong with Murray?

JACK
He's a trancer!

LEENA
A what?

JACK pushes past MRS. CLAUS and leaps the white picket fence surrounding the gingerbread house.

The tranced SANTA yanks a large metal candy cane from the snow. He swings it wildly at JACK'S head as the Trooper charges.

JACK ducks. The candy cane swoops past his skull and bashes the head off a plastic elf mannequin.

The line of parents and children scatters. Astonished shoppers gasp and drop their packages.

SANTA brings up the candy cane for another attempt. JACK'S fist shoots up, catching the trancer square on the chin. SANTA staggers back, dropping the candy cane.

LEENA
Phil! My God, what're you doing?

MRS. CLAUS reaches over to the counter and grabs up a walkie-talkie.

MRS. CLAUS
(to LEENA)
One of your "friends"?
(into radio)
Security! We've got trouble at the North Pole-

Before JACK can deliver another punch, SANTA leaps upon him, snarling. The trancer locks his hands about JACK'S throat. The berserk SANTA bares his teeth and moves his face closer, as if to bite into JACK.

JACK forces his knees up, planting his feet against the trancer's chest. JACK pushes hard, trying to pry his opponent off.

Instead, the two interlocked combatants roll end over end into a pile of artificial snow. A flurry of flakes surround JACK and SANTA as they thrash about, pummeling one another.

SANTA connects solidly with JACK'S stomach, knocking the wind from him. Before JACK can recover, the trancer seizes him by the coat and throws him against the wall of the gingerbread house.

JACK shakes his head. As his vision clears, he sees SANTA uproot a plastic reindeer. Holding the figure by its hind legs, SANTA aims the sharp antlers at JACK and charges.

Dazed, JACK starts to reach inside his coat for his revolver.

He twists his body slightly as the sharp antlers jab into the gingerbread house. The points dig deep into the wood, pinning JACK through his coat.

As SANTA attempts to pull the antlers free for a second thrust, a mall SECURITY GUARD rushes up from behind, gun drawn.

SECURITY GUARD
Okay, hold it!

SANTA spins around. Before the GUARD can react, SANTA has snatched the gun from his hand and stepped behind him. The trancer throws an arm across the hapless GUARD'S throat, using him as a shield.

The onlookers shriek and fall to the linoleum, some clutching their children beneath them, as the manic SANTA aims the gun at JACK.

JACK struggles against the horns of the plastic reindeer, which still pin him like a butterfly to the side of the gingerbread house. His hand crawls closer to the butt of the .38 stuck in his waistband.

The trancer fires. LEENA screams as a jagged hole is blown in the side of the house, inches from JACK'S head. The trancer laughs crazily and levels the gun for another shot.

JACK'S fingers wrap around the .38's grip he tugs the revolver from his waistband and swings the barrel up.

SECURITY GUARD
(to JACK)
Don't shoot! Jesus!

JACK calmly squeezes the trigger.

The slug hits SANTA in the upper chest. The trancer flies backward, mortally wounded. The unharmed GUARD falls free, in a state of near shock.

KID
Mommy! Mommy! He shot Santa Claus!

JACK puts his smoking revolver to the reindeer's plastic head. He pulls the trigger. The head explodes and the antlers fly apart, freeing him.

JACK goes over to SANTA. He kneels beside the motionless body and checks the pulse.

Suddenly, SANTA'S eyes flutter. He reaches up and grasps JACK'S face.

SANTA'S mouth opens. A voice emanates from inside him, but the sound is hollow, and SANTA does not move his lips to form the words.

WHISTLER'S VOICE
Welcome to the 20th Century, Jack
Deth!

The hand loosens on JACK'S face, then drops off. The eyes close for a final time.

Rapidly approaching sirens alert JACK. He races over to LEENA who is crouched by the counter, terrified.

JACK
(grabbing her hand)
You're coming with me.

LEENA
No!

He points the revolver at her and cocks the hammer.

JACK
I need you.

He pulls her to her feet and drags her quickly towards the entrance.

INT- SHOPPING MALL- DAY

The terrified mall patrons cower as JACK and LEENA hurry by. JACK waves his gun threateningly.

As JACK and LEENA pass him, an enormous tattooed man in motorcycle boots takes a step forward, as if to rush JACK from behind.

JACK whips around, as if sensing the man by pure instinct. He puts the barrel an inch from the man's nose.

JACK
Don't piss me off.

The man backs off, his hands in the air. JACK pulls LEENA out the door and into the parking lot.

INT- "NORTH POLE"- DAY

SANTA'S body lies on a lowered gurney. Kneeling beside the corpse is a police detective in a conservative grey suit. Two paramedics wait nearby, and several uniformed LAPD officers stand in the background, keeping the shoppers at bay.

DETECTIVE
Lopez!

An officer hurries over with a black tarp and covers the body.

DETECTIVE
(cont)
And move those people back.

The officer nods, then departs to relay the order. The DETECTIVE lifts the corner of the tarp, peering at the body. A red glow surrounds the corpse. The body disappears. The tarp settles.

DETECTIVE
(cont)
(to paramedics)
Get this thing out of here- now.

The paramedics quickly raise the gurney and wheel it off, avoiding onlookers.

The DETECTIVE goes to the weeping MRS. CLAUS, who is comforted by the mall SECURITY GUARD.

DETECTIVE
(cont)
Ma'am, if you feel up to it, I need to ask a few questions.

MRS. CLAUS
(sobbing)
All right.

DETECTIVE
(taking out notebook)
My name's Detective Wiesling...

EXT- BLUE JAY WAY- DAY

Dethton's T-Bird is parked at a turn out on Blue Jay Way. JACK and LEENA stand beside the car, a panoramic city view spread below them. As LEENA listens dubiously, JACK sweeps his hand in the direction of the city.

JACK
...and somewhere, in all that city, are the two ancestors I've got to protect.

LEENA
All right...let's say I believe this shit, you're a cop from the future, and you're chasing this guy, Piper-

JACK
Whistler.

LEENA laughs, shaking her head.

LEENA
Yeah, well, why doesn't he just turn you into one of those zombies? Or me?

JACK
You're too tough.

LEENA
Tough?

JACK
Trancing only works on squids.

LEENA looks at him quizzically.

JACK
(cont)
People with weak minds, easily controlled. Leena, I won't get anywhere without a guide.

LEENA
Are you crazy? You killed Murray!

JACK
Has Murray ever twisted in knots and gone after someone like he went for me?

LEENA
Of course not...

She looks off into the distance, thinking a moment.

JACK
I haven't much time. At least take me to Cahuenga Boulevard.

LEENA
If I get you a map, will you let me go?

JACK
A map's not enough. I'm from another world, another time. I don't even know what you people eat for lunch.

LEENA
Okay, okay, where on Cahuenga?

JACK
You'll help me? Aw, swell!

He puts his hands on her shoulders and leans in to kiss her. LEENA puts her palm against his chest and pushes.

LEENA
Back off. And I don't want to see that gun in my face again.

JACK
Yeah, sure...

LEENA goes to the car and gets in behind the wheel.

LEENA
I'll drive from now on.

JACK
(grinning)
Whatever you say.
(searching his pockets)
The address was fourteen something... where the hell's that photo?

INT- "NORTH POLE"- DAY

The corner of the photo juts from the bank of fake snow. LOPEZ' hand reaches in and plucks the snapshot from the plastic flakes.

LOPEZ crosses to where WHISTLER (inhabiting the body of Det. Wiesling) is concluding his questioning of the KID'S mother.

WHISTLER
Thank you, ma'am. If we've any further questions, we'll call you. And have a merry Christmas.

The woman sighs and departs with her child as LOPEZ comes up beside WHISTLER.

LOPEZ
I found this in the snow.

WHISTLER takes the photo. He looks at the face of SPENCER'S ancestor, then turns the snapshot over to read the address.

Once again, WHISTLER studies the face in the photo. His gaze is intent, hypnotic, and beads of sweat appear on his forehead.

EXT- TANNING SALON- DAY

The T-Bird stops before the modern facade of a building on Cahuenga. A sign above the door reads:

TROPICAL TUBE TAN
-The Chris Lavery Method-

LEENA
Is this it?

JACK
(checking the sign)
Lavery...yeah.

JACK steps from the car and closes the door.

JACK
(cont)
I just want to say again that you're Look, you're not my prisoner. I'm not gonna force you to stick around, but I'd appreciate your waiting for me.

LEENA
(smiling)
Relax, Phil.

JACK
Jack. Phil's stepped out.

JACK turns and enters the salon.

LEENA watches him disappear, then puts the car in gear and takes off.

INT- TANNING SALON- DAY

The lobby of the salon is commercial ultramodern- all white tile and chrome. At a reception counter is SPENSER'S ancestor, a muscle-bound young man with close-cropped hair dressed in shorts and a tank top. The man is ridiculously tan.

JACK
You Chris Lavery?

LAVERY
In person.

JACK looks him up and down.

JACK
(drily)
I like your tan. It's very Chrismasy.

LAVERY
Hey, thanks. Now, what'll it be? The Tube Tan in ten, or the Tropic Tan in twenty?

JACK
What?

LAVERY
You need color. Go for the twenty.

JACK
Save the hard sell. I'm a cop.

LAVERY
Is this about that guy last week? Hey, he screwed with the thermo setting! Anyway, it was just first degree burns.

JACK
That's not why I'm here. I have to be blunt, pal. Someone's gonna try to kill you.

LAVERY
Oh, come on-!

JACK
And he'll succeed if you don't come under my protection.

LAVERY starts to laugh. He catches the grim look on JACK'S face.

LAVERY
You're serious.

JACK
Yeah.

LAVERY nods towards a hallway behind JACK.

LAVERY
We'd better talk in my office.

JACK
Okay.

JACK turns and takes a step towards the corridor.

Suddenly, LAVERY brings his massive fist square into the side of JACK'S neck. JACK drops unconscious to the floor.

Sweating heavily, LAVERY comes around the counter and bends down over JACK. His face begins to twitch, then buckle, as the trancing expands and mutates the bone and tissue. He seems to grow even larger, the muscles twisting beneath the skin.

LAVERY drags JACK down the hallway.

INT- TANNING TUBE- DAY

JACK awakens to a searing flash of bright orange light. He finds himself in a cylindrical room barely three feet in diameter. He is slumped in a seat built into the wall. The tanning tube is lined with lights and reflecting panels.

Within seconds, the tube has become uncomfortably hot. JACK shakes himself to full consciousness. He stumbles to his feet, seeing the seam of a door before him.

JACK pushes the latch. The door does not budge. The temperature has become unbearable. JACK kicks the door to no effect. He pulls up the sleeves of his overcoat to protect his hands, then pounds his fists against the burning metal of the jammed door.

He looks down at his coat sleeves. Where the sleeves contacted the heated door, the material is smoldering.

INT- HALLWAY- DAY

The door to the tanning booth has been secured with a broomstick stuck between the handles. On the wall beside the door is a digital meter labeled "Thermo Setting". Above the meter, an illuminated plastic panel is flashing in red: "DANGER- Maximum Exceeded".

LEENA
(o.s.)
Hello? Anyone here? Jack?

INT- TANNING SALON- DAY

LEENA comes around the empty reception counter.

LEENA
(cont)
Jack?

She stops suddenly and sucks in her breath.

On the tile floor behind the counter is a very dead CHRIS LAVERY. JACK'S revolver lies in LAVERY'S open palm, and his head rests in a pool of blood.

Then, to LEENA'S sheer disbelief, LAVERY'S body glows red and vaporizes.

Overcoming her shock, LEENA picks up JACK'S gun and warily enters the hallway.

INT- HALLWAY- DAY

The heavy .38 shaking in her grasp, LEENA moves down the row of doors lining the hall.

LEENA
Jack!

She spots the broomstick jamming the door handles of JACK'S booth.

Using all her strength, LEENA tugs the broomstick free. The door opens and JACK spills out at her feet.

LEENA kneels down and shakes him.

LEENA
(cont)
Oh God, don't be dead! Come on, Jack...

He opens his eyes and smiles weakly at her.

JACK
How's my tan?

LEENA
You okay?

JACK
I guess...sorta feel like a baked potato. Help me up.

LEENA
(assisting him)
There was this dead muscle guy up front...

JACK
Lavery. He was tranced.

LEENA
I saw this red light...and he disappeared like on "Star Trek"!

JACK
(not listening)
Whistler knows I'm here. We'd better scram.

He takes his gun from her and shoves it in his belt, then quickly walks her toward the reception area.

INT- TANNING SALON- DAY

JACK and LEENA step over LAVERY'S scorchmark and enter the reception area. They start for the door, then freeze.

Through the glass they see LOPEZ and another of WHISTLER'S officers about to enter the salon.

JACK and LEENA duck back down the hallway.

INT- HALLWAY- DAY

At the end of the hall is a door marked "EXIT". JACK and LEENA push through to the parking lot behind the building.

EXT- PARKING LOT- DAY

JACK and LEENA enter the parking lot- and stop abruptly.

Blocking their way are WHISTLER and two officers with drawn revolvers.

JACK stares for a moment at the detective, reading Wiesling's features.

WHISTLER
So. We've collared the Santa Claus killer, and his accomplice.

JACK
Whistler?

WHISTLER
None other. Farewell, Jack Deth.
(to officers)
Fire.

The gun hammers fall; fire and smoke spit from the barrels. At the same instant, JACK activates the "long second" device.

The world around him stops. The silence is absolute.

JACK gulps at the sight of a bullet frozen in midflight mere inches from his head. His eyes on the slug, JACK tugs at LEENA'S hand.

JACK
Come on!

JACK is unable to budge her. He looks over at LEENA, who, like WHISTLER and the officers, are caught in a surreal tableau. A second bullet hovers before the girl's heart.

The "long second" ticks down. Grunting, JACK picks up LEENA and carries her off as he would a mannequin.

EXT- TANNING SALON- DAY

With LEENA in his arms, JACK hurries through the frozen world, rounding the corner of the building and racing to the T-Bird at the curb. The only sound is that of his shoes hitting the pavement.

He sets the stiff-limbed girl in the passenger seat, then jumps in behind the wheel. JACK reaches for the key. The ignition slot is empty.

JACK
Shit!

He reaches over and shoves his hand in the pocket of LEENA'S jumper.

At that instant the "long second" ends and real time is restored.

LEENA "thaws", only to find JACK'S hand plunged into her pocket.

LEENA
Hey!

JACK withdraws the car keys and slams them into the ignition. LEENA looks around in confusion.

LEENA
(cont)
How come we're not dead?

The engine running, JACK cocks his revolver. He shoots out a tire on the police car parked behind them.

He throws the T-Bird in gear and speeds off just as WHISTLER and the mystified cops round the corner from the parking lot.

WHISTLER runs to the squad car, then stops at the sight of the flat tire. He pounds his fist against the fender.

LOPEZ
How did they do that?

WHISTLER
How indeed?

INT- T-BIRD- DAY

JACK steers the T-Bird through Hollywood. LEENA checks the traffic behind them.

LEENA
I don't think anyone's after us.

JACK
They will be.

LEENA
Can I ask you something?

JACK
Sure.

LEENA
When you used that time freezer thing...why didn't you get Whistler right then?

JACK
I only had a few seconds. If I'd singed him, I couldn't have saved you.

LEENA
Oh...

She looks away, embarrassed.

JACK
What's wrong?

LEENA
Well, after you went into the tanning place, I took off. I guess I was scared of you. Your story was so weird.

JACK
I wouldn't have believed me.

LEENA
But that stuff about Murray made sense, so I came back.

He reacts to something in the rear-view mirror.

JACK
(cont)
Cops.

LEENA starts to turn around.

JACK
(cont)
Don't look back! Maybe it's nothing. Whistler can't trance the whole police department...

As the car pulls up beside them, LEENA laughs, relieved. Inside are a pair of pot-bellied Teamster-types wearing down vests. A canvas pad covers the police insignia on the door.

LEENA
It's a movie car.

JACK
Huh?

LEENA
They must be filming nearby.

JACK
Yeah, Hollywood. Boy, a lot of big stars died in the Quake.

LEENA
Quake?

JACK
Ask me later.

He hands her the "Hap" Ashby baseball card.

JACK
(cont)
Ever hear of this guy?

LEENA
'63 Angels? I wasn't even born then.

JACK
We've got to find him before Whistler does. And we need somewhere to hole up.

LEENA
Yeah...hey, I know. A friend of mine went out of town for Christmas. No one'll look for us at her place.

JACK
Which way?

LEENA
Head east- to Chinatown.

EXT- DOWNTOWN L.A.- DAY

JACK and LEENA stop before a run-down hotel on a dirty downtown back street. Derelicts and riff-raff eye the shiny car.

INT- T-BIRD- DAY

JACK
(glancing about)
Doesn't look Chinese to me.

LEENA
It's not. We'll walk the rest of the way.

JACK
What about the T-Bird?

LEENA
We have to dump it, don't we?

JACK
But, I love this car!

LEENA
(incredulous)
Come on, Jack! The cops'll have a description.

JACK
There's millions of cars in L.A.!

LEENA
You really do need a guide. This car's rare, a classic.
(opening door)
Leave the keys.

JACK lets the keys dangle in the ignition. He steps from the car and follows LEENA up the block.

EXT- DOWNTOWN L.A.- DAY

LEENA
(taking his arm)
It'll be gone in two minutes.

JACK looks back mournfully as the street people converge on the car.

EXT- CHINATOWN- NIGHT

LEENA walks out from a Chinese take-out restaurant. Slung over her arm is a net shopping bag filled with food cartons and other items. She has changed from her elf costume to a short skirt, tights, loose black sweater and a sleeveless red leather vest.

She passes the Oriental facades hung with pink and green neon, strings of illuminated Chinese lanterns and the out of place Christmas decorations. She reaches into a bag for an almond cookie and bites into it as she walks.

LEENA goes by a night club, garishly fronted with red and gold pillars and dragons. The neon over the door reads: "LAST WAVE". A large cardboard sign tacked to the door announces: "LIVE TONITE- THE BUTT-HEADS".

She turns the corner of the building and ascends a rickety staircase to a second floor landing. She opens the door and goes in.

INT- PUNK APARTMENT- NIGHT

The apartment is a "single", with a combination living room-bedroom and a small kitchen in the corner. The furnishings are 1950's "Atomic Age"- blond wood, pink formica, geometric shapes, wrought iron, zebra-skin print material on the walls. LEENA enters and sets the shopping bag on a dining table. JACK is sprawled on the twin bed watching "Dragnet" on TV.

LEENA
What're you watching?

JACK
It's called "Dragnet".

LEENA
Ugh.

JACK
It's good. But what kind of name is "Joe Friday"?

LEENA
(snapping off set)
What kind of name is "Jack Deth"?

He follows her to the table as she sets out cartons of Chinese food.

LEENA
I got egg rolls, fried rice, and beef chow mein.

JACK
(amazed)
Beef?
(opening carton)
You mean, from a cow?

LEENA
Where else?

JACK digs a fork into the chow mein and stuffs it in his mouth. He is in ecstacy.

LEENA
(cont)
I bought that radio you wanted.

She takes a box from the shopping bag. JACK nods his thanks, wolfing down an eggroll.

LEENA
(cont)
It's got the police band and all that other junk.
(opening box)
And it has an earphone, so I don't have to listen to it.

She hands JACK a VisaCard and the receipt.

LEENA
(cont)
I charged dinner, too. Was that okay?

JACK
Sure, Phil won't mind. We'll call it my inheritance.
(pointing to fortune cookies)
What're these?

LEENA
Fortune cookies. There's a message inside. Here, I'll do yours.

She breaks a cookie open and pulls out the paper slip. She looks at it, and her eyes widen with fear.

LEENA
Oh my God. It's from Whistler.

JACK
Read it!

LEENA
"I'll kill you and your bitchen girlfriend!"

JACK leaps up and slams his fist on the table.

JACK
Damn it! How could he have found-
...Wait a minute. My "bitchen girlfriend?"

JACK looks over at LEENA, who can no longer control her laughter.

JACK
You think you're pretty funny.

LEENA
Uh huh.

Just then the floorboards shake with the stunning thump of bass and drums. Screaming guitars climb up the walls.

JACK
What the hell is that?

LEENA
Music from the club downstairs.

JACK
When does it stop?

LEENA
Two or three in the morning.

JACK
I can't stay here.

LEENA
Oh, you'll get used to it. Let's go down, have some fun.

JACK takes the radio from the box.

JACK
Nah.

LEENA
I thought you wanted to know all about L.A.

JACK
I have to monitor the police band, keep tabs on Whistler.

She takes the small radio from his hand and slips it into his pocket.

LEENA
(cont)
Take it with you.

LEENA crosses to the open closet and starts going through the racks. She holds up a dress and frowns.

LEENA
(cont)
Boy, Candy's got some ugly clothes.

JACK
You'd better get blue streak out of your hair. You're too easy to identify.

LEENA
Forget it.

JACK
I gave up the T-Bird.

LEENA
Okay, Mr. Detective.

She pulls off her sweater, throws it at him, and goes into the bathroom.

INT- LAST WAVE- NIGHT

The club is small, cramped, dimly lit, and full of cigarette smoke. Along one wall is a bar opposite an absolutely jammed dance floor. On a tiny wooden stage are the Butt-heads, blasting out a loud, nearly incomprehensible set.

Towing JACK by the hand, LEENA leads him through the crowd. LEENA has changed her clothes to an outfit made up of army surplus attire and lots of costume jewelry. A black bandana is tied in her hair. The blue streak has been replaced with a pink one. JACK'S radio earphone snakes from his pocket to his ear.

JACK
(glancing about)
I see why you call them punks.

LEENA
Let's dance.

JACK stares out over the floor, where leather-clad punks and skinheads are furiously dancing, jostling and pushing each other as the music hammers from the stage.

JACK
You kidding? Looks like a roomful of trancers.

LEENA
Come on!

She yanks him out on the dance floor. As she begins to dance, JACK looks around, shrugs, and begins trying to approximate her steps.

After a moment he loosens up, synchs with LEENA- and almost starts to enjoy himself.

JACK
How am I doing?

LEENA
Not bad- for a "squid".

She grins at him, then momentarily leans in and kisses him on the cheek.

Suddenly JERRY, a hulking twenty-year-old with a blue mohawk and sleeveless denim vest, steps between LEENA and JACK.

JERRY
Leena. How come you don't call me anymore?

LEENA
I told you, Jerry, leave me alone.

JERRY
You still got some of my tapes, man.

LEENA
I'll drop them at your Mom's, okay?

JACK taps JERRY on the shoulder.

JACK
Beat it, Hiawatha. This is my dance.

JERRY looks JACK up and down, smirking.

JERRY
(to LEENA)
Who's the old fuck? He's even got a hearing aid.

JERRY roughly takes LEENA'S arm.

JERRY
(cont)
Buy me a drink.

JACK
Hey. Shove off, or I'll sweep this joint with your head.

JERRY turns, sneers, then spits in JACK'S face.

LEENA gasps. JACK wipes away the spittle with his sleeve.

JACK
Oh no, no.

He raises his head and stares hard into the punk's beady eyes.

JACK
(cont)
(very calmly)
Now you've pissed me off.

JACK smashes his fist into JERRY'S face. The punk topples back, out cold. JERRY falls into the dancing couples, who react with little more than mild amusement.

JACK
(cont)
You've got swell friends.

LEENA
(looking past him)
Jack...

He turns to find three more punks, all outfitted like JERRY- blue Mohawks and denim vests.

JACK
He brought the whole tribe!

The three Mohawks pounce on JACK. LEENA screams. JACK is buried in a flurry of kicks and punches.

LEENA grabs a beer bottle from a passing punk and bashes one of the Mohawks over the head.

He turns and takes a dazed swing at her. She ducks, and the punch connects with a spike-haired man behind LEENA. The enraged Spike leaps on the Mohawk.

Suddenly the entire dance floor becomes a riot scene. The Butt-heads play on, a manic soundtrack to the brawl, occasionally tossing crazed punks from the stage.

EXT- LAST WAVE- NIGHT

The fire exit opens. JACK and LEENA stumble out, the fight continuing inside. JACK cups his hand to a nasty gash on his forehead. LEENA helps him start up the staircase to the second floor.

INT- PUNK APARTMENT- NIGHT

JACK sits on a chair at the dining table, holding a damp washcloth over his forehead cut. His shirt is off, exposing scratches on his chest. He examines marks on his upper arm.

JACK
One of them bit me.

LEENA calls out from the bathroom.

LEENA
(o.s.)
Poor baby!

JACK
Did you find some pain killer?

LEENA comes from the bathroom wearing a silk kimono. She hands JACK a glass of water and two aspirin.

JACK
Thanks.

LEENA takes a small wrapped box from her pocket and sets it on the table before JACK.

LEENA
Merry Christmas.

JACK
Today?

LEENA
It's after midnight- December 25th.

JACK
I didn't know...it's July in Angel City.

LEENA
Go ahead, open it.

JACK pulls off the paper. Inside is a wind-up space robot toy with a little ray gun.

JACK
What is it?

She shows him the writing on the box.

LEENA
"Futureman"! Just like you.

JACK stands and winds up the toy. The metal man walks stiff-legged across the table. He laughs.

LEENA
Do you like it?

JACK
It's great. I don't know what to say.

LEENA
Don't say anything.

She kisses him, tenderness leading to passion. Still kissing her, JACK leans her back over the bed. They gently fall upon the covers.

LEENA hesitates.

LEENA
(cont)
Jack...where's Phil.

JACK
(kissing her neck)
His brain's on hold.

LEENA
Oh.

She wraps her arms tightly about him.

JACK abruptly pulls away.

JACK
(suspicious)
Why?

LEENA
'Cause I like you a lot better.

JACK loosens her kimono and slips his hand inside.

There is a knock at the door. They separate, panicked.

JACK
Goddamnit!

Motioning for LEENA to keep still, JACK grabs up his revolver and creeps silently to the door.

From behind the door comes the voice of a little girl.

GIRL
Open up, Jack, quit stallin'!

LEENA
It sounds like a kid.

JACK warily cracks the door, looks down, then opens it all the way. Standing on the porch is a pigtailed seven-year-old girl in pajamas, pink bathrobe, and bunny slippers.

JACK
What is this?

GIRL
It's me, McNulty!

She pushes past JACK and swaggers into the room.

JACK
(laughing)
McNulty-!

GIRL
And none of your lip! This kid's the only ancestor I could find. It's been hell. I had to sneak past the parents and everything...
(spotting LEENA)
Say, who's the skirt? Nice...

JACK
Tone it down, McNulty, will ya?

GIRL
Listen, Jack, you've gotta come back to Angel City. Spenser disappeared like a floater trail, and Ashe is goin' to pieces. He wants to talk to you.

JACK
Tell him not to worry, I'm doing my job.

GIRL
I got my orders, Jack-!

JACK picks up the child and carries her, kicking, out the door.

JACK
I'm busy, McNulty. Now run along before I give you a spanking.

He sets the girl on the porch and slams the door behind her.

JACK grabs LEENA and pulls her back to the bed as the GIRL begins pounding on the door.

GIRL
(o.s.)
I'll bust you to zero, Trooper!

LEENA
(giggling)
Was that your boss?

JACK
He thinks he is.

Parting her robe, JACK picks up where he left off.

Neither he nor LEENA see the window facing the porch slip up several inches. A tiny hand edged by pink bathrobe and holding a slim brass-barrelled drug gun edges into the opening.

There is a soft burst of air and a microdart flies across the room. The injector strikes JACK in the shoulder.

JACK
Ahhhhh-

INT- TIME LAB- DAY

In the Angel City Time Lab, JACK and MCNULTY lie on suspension tables, the plastic bubbles open and folded back. RAINES, the techician, stands nearby.

JACK
-aaaah!

JACK'S eyes open.

ASHE
He's back!

With RAINES' assistance, JACK sits up. As he shakes his head groggily, MCNULTY awakens. He weakly points at JACK and laughs loudly.

JACK slides off the table and grabs MCNULTY by the collar.

JACK
Damn it, McNulty, couldn't you have waited an hour?

MCNULTY brushes him off.

MCNULTY
Maybe, if I hadn't gotten the bum's rush. You shouldn't pick on little kids.

JACK
Listen, if you don't like my style, I'll dump this case right now.

MCNULTY
(smirking)
Why do you think I brought you back? I'm slagging your badge, once and for all.

JACK
On whose authority?

ASHE appears in the doorway.

ASHE
Mine, Trooper Deth.

ASHE staggers towards them. His cheeks are sunken, his eyes full of fright. He frequently takes small blue wafers from a pillbox and puts them in his mouth.

JACK
(to RAINES, quietly)
Lotus eater?

RAINES
(nodding)
He's nearly dead from fear.

She goes to ASHE and helps him as he walks. She gently takes the pillbox from him, closes it, and places it in his pocket.

RAINES
You've had enough of these for now.

ASHE grips JACK'S arm with white fingers.

ASHE
There are two empty chairs in the Council chambers, Jack Deth. There shall not be three. I've ordered your replacement.

JACK
Yeah? Who?

MCNULTY
One of my boys, Lars Kwan.

JACK
Kwan! He works the Hot-houses! Never singed a trancer in his life.

ASHE
Whistler's legions are massing near Angel City, awaiting the fall of the Council. You failed to protect Spenser's ancestor, how can I trust you with the life of my own?

JACK
Don't pull me back now...I'm close to finding Ashby.

MCNULTY
The only thing you're "close" to is that cotton candy.

JACK
The "cotton candy" was my lead, pal. She's gonna take me right to Ashby.

ASHE'S fill with hope.

ASHE
Is it true?

MCNULTY
It's a bluff. He found a girl, that's all.

RAINES
What's new?

ASHE puts his hands on JACK'S shoulder and looks deeply into his eyes.

ASHE
Is it true?

JACK
Would I lie?

ASHE
Very well.
(beckoning)
Raines.

JACK lies on the suspension table as RAINES prepares the time serum injection.

MCNULTY
It's a mistake, sir. 'Kwan is the better man.

ASHE
I've made my decision. Let fate do the rest.
(starting off)
Good luck, Trooper Deth.

He chews another sedative wafer as he goes out.

JACK
Say, that long second gag worked out. How 'bout a refill?

RAINES
We'll send one down the line.

She places the injector against his neck. JACK gently pushes it aside.

JACK
Hold on.
(to MCNULTY)
If I see you again in L.A.- I don't care if you're a kid, an old lady, or a kitty cat- I'm gonna kick your ass

MCNULTY
(to RAINES)
Get him outa here.

RAINES touches the injector to JACK'S neck. She pauses, speaking so only JACK will hear.

RAINES
(kindly)
I hope she's worth it, Jack.

She administers the serum.

JACK
Ahhhh-

INT- PUNK APT- NIGHT

JACK awakens in Dethton's body.

JACK
-aaaah!

He finds himself lying in the bed next to LEENA, who is sound asleep, her hair tousled.

JACK
Leena?

She moans, smiles sleepily, and rolls over, throwing an arm around him.

LEENA
Oohh...that was too much.

JACK
Too much what?

He spies their clothes, heaped at the foot of the bed.

JACK
(cont)
Hey...wait a minute.

He lifts the sheet and peers beneath it, frowning.

LEENA
Jack, we should get some sleep.

She turns on her side, and is out again instantly.

JACK
Leena...

She does not respond.

JACK
(cont)
Well, Phil, hope you enjoyed yourself... <u>again</u>.

Frustrated, JACK reaches for the TV remote control. On the nightstand beside it is a small metallic blue box. He finds a new "long second" device inside and straps it on his wrist.

JACK switches on the TV set. He presses the channel selector. The stations flip by rapidly.

JACK
(as if rolling dice)
Come on, "Dragnet".

He releases the button, stopping at a commercial.

PITCHMAN
(o.s.)
You, too, can proudly display the art treasures of the world in your own home! Imagine! Your private gallery of fine reproductions! "Blue Boy"! "Mona Lisa"! "Last Supper"! And everyone's favorite, "Whistler's Mother"!

JACK
I didn't know he had a mother.

He spins through the dial once more, then stops.

ANNOUNCER
(o.s.)
We'll return to "The Midnight Movie" after this Channel Three "Newsbreak".

ANCHORWOMAN
(o.s.)
Good evening. In the news tonight, the LAPD sweep of Skid Row vagrants continues. Here's Larry Stone with a live report.

JACK is about to change the channel, but stops, riveted.

On the screen is footage of WHISTLER, being interviewed by reporter STONE. Behind them, WHISTLER'S officers are herding shabby derelicts into a paddy wagon.

STONE
With me is Lt. Wiesling, who heads the new Skid Row Task Force. Leiutenant, what will happen to these men?

WHISTLER
Well, Larry, they'll be taken to Parker Center and issued special I.D. cards. With all the crime downtown, the program will help us keep track of the homeless, and protect the innocent. As you can see, I've-

JACK clicks off the set and shakes LEENA.

JACK
Wake up!

LEENA
Now what?

JACK
(jumping up)
Get dressed. We're going to Skid Row.

He tosses her clothes at her. The black sweater lands on her head and flops down over her eyes.

EXT- CHINATOWN- NIGHT

Still looking drowsy, LEENA buttons up her jacket as JACK hurries her down the second floor staircase. The police band radio earphone is in his ear.

LEENA
Can't this wait 'til morning?

JACK
This hobo round-up means one thing: Whistler thinks Hap Ashby's on Skid Row. How far is that from here?

LEENA
A couple miles.

JACK
Okay, we'll get a cab.

LEENA
We're out of cash.

They round the corner and pass through the alley beside the "Last Wave". Music still pounds from within the building. Several motor scooters are parked beside the club's side entrance.

JACK
Then we walk.

LEENA
No, we don't.

She goes to a pair of motor scooters and begins fiddling with the electronic starters.

LEENA
(cont)
Pretend you're not a cop for a few minutes.

One of the scooters purrs to life. She goes to work on the second one.

JACK
Where did you learn that?

LEENA
I used to hang with some bikers, when I was fifteen.

The second bike starts up.

LEENA
Get on.

They climb aboard the scooters.

LEENA
(cont)
Follow me!

She takes off down the alley, with JACK trailing. His trenchcoat flaps behind him in the wind.

EXT- VACANT LOT- NIGHT

In a weed-covered vacant lot between a pair of abandoned buildings, three vagrants warm their hands at a trash-can bonfire. As they pass a bottle of cheap port, they croak out an appropriate Christmas carol.

BUMS
(singing)
"We three kings of Orient are/ trying to find a wandering star..."

JACK and LEENA pull up on their scooters and eye the trio.

LEENA
Jack, it's hopeless...I can't talk to any more of these guys. They're too out of it.

JACK
This is what being a cop's all about, Leena, whether it's here, or two hundred years down the line.

He climbs off the bike and walks towards the singing winos. LEENA reluctantly follows.

JACK
'Evening, citizens.

WINO
What ho, knave.
(indicating LEENA)
An' what glorious angel have you brought for we three kings to gaze upon?

JACK puts his arm about LEENA and smiles benevolently.

JACK
This is the Christmas Angel-

LEENA
(squirming)
Jack!

JACK
(under his breath)
Play along.
(to bums)
The Angel has a mission.

JACK shoves the baseball card into her hand, and nudges her to keep talking.

LEENA
I..uh...I seek knowledge.

WINO
They don't call us wise men for nothin'.

LEENA shows them the baseball card.

LEENA
Do you know this guy?

The WINO squints at the card.

WINO
Yeah...yeah, 'course I do.

LEENA
You do?

WINO
Sure, that's "High-ball".

LEENA
Where can we find him?

WINO
That depends.

JACK
On what?

WINO
Has the Angel any gifts for three weary travellers?

LEENA sighs and opens her purse, pawing through the contents.

LEENA
Well...I don't have any gold, but here's some frankincense and myhrr.

She hands the WINO a pack of cigarettes and a box of Good 'N Plenty, which he snatches greedily.

WINO
Check the old belt factory on Alameda.

JACK
(to LEENA)
Can you find it?

LEENA
Think so.

JACK
(to WINO)
Thanks a lot, your majesty.

He and LEENA walk off. The WINO doles out Good 'N Plenty to his companions.

WINO
(singing)
"Hark the herald angels sing..."

LEENA straddles her scooter and revs the engine.

JACK
Kill it!

She stops the engine, as JACK listens intently to the police radio earphone.

JACK
(cont)
Whistler knows about the factory... they're gonna sweep through it! We've got to find Ashby first! We'll ditch the bikes nearby, and I'll go in on foot.

LEENA
Alone?

JACK
Yeah. Let me carry the rough end, I don't want you getting hurt.

LEENA
I'm not afraid.

JACK
I am.

He kisses her.

EXT- BELT FACTORY- NIGHT

An abandoned factory sits near the railroad yards, its windows broken, its brick crumbling. Paint peels from the sign on the factory's side: "DEBONAIR BELT CO."

A police car is parked before the building. Inside, flashlight beams are sweeping through the darkness, reflecting off the shards jutting from window frames.

JACK creeps through the shadows along the building's side. He finds a wide first-story window, covered with rotting planks. After easily removing the boards, he slips through the opening.

INT- BELT FACTORY- NIGHT

The factory interior is knee deep in trash and rubble. Here and there are crude lean-to's of discarded cardboard or lumber scraps, the remains of cooking fires, empty wine bottles- all the trappings of a typical urban hobo jungle.

Keeping along one wall, JACK cautiously moves across the floor, avoiding the police flashlight beams cutting through the dust.

LOPEZ
(to other cop)
This room's clean. Let's check the next wing.

LOPEZ and his partner walk off into another section of the warehouse.

JACK moves across the floor, towards a cardboard refrigerator box laying on its side. He lifts the box end, peers in, then enters to have a look.

INT- BOX- NIGHT

The box has been furnished with an old blanket in one corner and a small wooden crate. On the crate is a candle stub and matches.

JACK lights the candle. In the feeble glow he finds that the inside walls have been covered with magazine photos of tropical islands, picturesque sunsets, etc.

Discovering nothing else, he blows out the candle. As he turns to replace it on the crate, his foot bumps an empty wine bottle. It clinks loudly against another.

LOPEZ
(o.s.)
I heard something...come on.

JACK crawls back onto the blanket. He spots an old battered hat beneath it. Wincing at the smell, he puts on the hat just as LOPEZ lifts the corner of the box.

The patrolmen's flashlights flood the box. JACK pulls up the collar of his overcoat, to hide his face.

JACK
("drunk")
Watch them lights, Trooper! Jeez, can' a guy get some sleep? Iss Chris'mas!

The lights are averted from his face.

LOPEZ
You Ashby?

JACK
Who? I don' know 'im.

LOPEZ
You got some I.D., buddy?

JACK
Yeah...somewhere...

He starts patting his pockets, then lurches forward.

JACK
(cont)
I gotta puke-!

The policemen recoil in disgust.

LOPEZ
It's not him. Let's go.

They quickly leave the box.

INT- BELT FACTORY- NIGHT

LOPEZ and his partner cross the trash-strewn floor, heading for another section of the warehouse. LOPEZ stops abruptly.

LOPEZ
Wait...he called us "Troopers". The Leiutenant said Jack Deth was a trooper.

He nods back towards the box. The two cops silently retrace their steps, revolvers drawn. LOPEZ stops at the box entrance; his partner covers the rear.

LOPEZ lifts the box flap and shines his light in.

LOPEZ
Empty! Radio Wiesling- we need a backup.

The policeman nods and starts out.

LOPEZ
(cont)
And kick those headlights on, I can't see a thing.

His partner vanishes into the darkness.

LOPEZ sweeps his light across the walls, his hand tense on the trigger of his .38.

He hears a rustling noise in the corner and flips the beam in its direction. A rat scurries out.

Suddenly, intense white light from the squad car high-beams pour through the warehouse windows. LOPEZ is startled by the sight of JACK'S tall shadow racing across the far wall.

LOPEZ fires. The shots punch harmlessly into the bricks.

In the far corner of the warehouse, JACK struggles with a window, finally forcing up the hinged metal frame. He gets one leg through the opening, then starts to squeeze the rest of his body through.

Suddenly the hinge gives way, swinging the frame down to connect with the back of his head. A cry of pain escapes from JACK'S lips.

LOPEZ reacts to the sound, raking his light along the wall until he nets JACK in the beam.

LOPEZ
Hold it! Now climb down nice and easy.

JACK complies, prying himself from the window.

LOPEZ
(cont)
Open the coat.

JACK does so. LOPEZ sees the gun butt protruding from JACK'S belt.

LOPEZ
(cont)
Toss the piece out, far as you can.

JACK withdraws his revolver and throws it out into the debris behind LOPEZ.

LOPEZ
(cont)
Do the same with the fancy wristwatch. You're not pulling that one again.

JACK removes the "long second" device and tosses it aside.

LOPEZ smiles cruelly.

LOPEZ
The Leiutenant's told us all about you, Deth, how you're trying to twist our world, so the future comes out the way you want it.

JACK
You've got me wrong, pal, I'm a cop just like you.

LOPEZ begins to take on trancer characteristics.

LOPEZ
No...you're lying.

JACK
Your men have been tranced, you're slaves to Whistler...look at your skin!

LOPEZ stares at his hands and laughs at the buckling skin.

JACK
(cont)
Fight it! Concentrate! If your will is strong, he can't hold you!

LOPEZ
The Leiutenant is the finest man on the force. I've pledged my life to him...and my orders are shoot to kill.

He extends his arm and bears down on the trigger of his blue-steel revolver.

LOPEZ fires. As the gun goes off, LOPEZ' back arches and he pitches forward. His shot strikes the window from above JACK'S head.

LEENA stands behind the fallen LOPEZ. JACK'S gun is in her hand, smoke issuing from the barrel.

LEENA
I heard shots...He...he was going to kill you...I had to do it.

JACK gently takes his gun from her hand.

JACK
Yeah, you did.

LEENA looks away from the body.

LEENA
Oh, God...

JACK
Don't take it so hard. He was dead from the moment he gave himself to Whistler.
(indicating body)
Look.

LEENA watches as red light crackles about LOPEZ' body. It disappears, leaving the floor scorched.

JACK
(cont)
Cheer up, you just singed your first trancer.

LEENA
(toneless)
Great.

JACK takes her by the hand.

JACK
Come on.

He leads her quickly off into the warehouse.

INT- WINO CELLAR- NIGHT

Several derelicts are gathered in the candle-lit cellar below the warehouse. Holding their rapt attention is "HAP" ASHBY, also known as "High-ball". HAP is in his early forties, but the grime and ragged clothes make him look much older. On his head is a threadbare baseball cap.

Opposite HAP stands another bum, who holds a piece of pipe like a baseball bat. He sways back and forth over a chunk of cardboard resembling home plate. Piled against the wall behind the "batter" is a mound of shattered green glass.

HAP
(to spectator)
Toss me another short dog.

The mangy spectator gives HAP an empty Thunderbird bottle.

HAP goes into his windup, then stops abruptly.

HAP
(cont)
(to batter)
Hold still, Willie, yer swayin' inta th' strike zone.

The batter salutes and tries to hold steady.

HAP pitches a perfect strike, dashing the bottle against the wall.

HAP
(cont)
That's it, boys, fifty strikes inna row! Pay up!

The grumbling winos shuffle up reluctantly, wheeling their shopping carts full of "hobo treasure"- rags, fast food left-overs, broken radios, etc.

HAP points to a tiny, dried-out evergreen branch, gaily decorated with smashed beer cans.

HAP
(cont)
Unner th' Chris'mas tree. I'll open yer gifts in th' mornin'.

The derelicts lift bulging sacks from their carts and arrange them beneath the tree.

INT- BELT FACTORY- NIGHT

JACK leads LEENA through the warehouse, searching for signs of derelicts. They hear a police siren, nearing the warehouse. JACK reacts to the sound.

JACK
That bum better turn up- fast!

The blinking lights of the arriving squad car flash through the broken windows.

JACK
(cont)
Damn- I lost the "long second" back there.

LEENA
(dangling the watch)
You mean this?

He reaches for it, but she pulls it back.

LEENA
(cont)
Kiss me first.

JACK
There's no time to kid around!

LEENA touches her finger to the activator button.

LEENA
I'll <u>make</u> time.

JACK grabs her and kisses her, simultaneously seizing the watch. He then hurries her further into the warehouse.

JACK
I think the Wise Men sapped us. There's no one here.

All at once the rotting floorboards give way. JACK and LEENA plunge through to the basement.

INT- WINO CELLAR-

The astonished winos step back as JACK and LEENA pick themselves up from the rubble.

JACK
You hurt?

LEENA
No, I'm okay.

JACK scans the faces of the cowering derelicts.

JACK
I'm looking for "High-ball"...

The vagrants eye one another in nervous silence.

LEENA stares at HAP, the baseball card in her hand.

LEENA
(nodding to HAP)
Jack...

JACK
You're Hap Ashby, aren't you.

HAP takes the baseball card from LEENA, and studies it. The card shakes in his hands.

HAP
(emotional)
I haven't seen one of these for a long time...who are you, mister?

JACK
Listen, Hap, there's men upstairs who want you dead.

HAP
Me? What for?

Suddenly, strong flashlight beams stab down from the edge of the hole, illuminating the circle of winos. JACK yanks LEENA back into the concealing shadows. WHISTLER'S commanding voice echoes into the basement; the man himself cannot be seen in the flood of light.

WHISTLER
Police! Nobody move!

The terrified winos freeze.

WHISTLER
(cont)
I want Hap Ashby.

He gets no response.

WHISTLER
(cont)
I'm tired of reasoning with worthless vermin. Step forward, Ashby- or I'll kill the lot of you.

The vagrants twitch in fear. Suddenly, one of them pushes HAP into the center of the light.

HAP
(to winos)
You...you bums!

The black barrel of a shotgun protrudes into the cellar, followed by the sound of the shell pumping into the breech.

HAP
No...please!

Revolver drawn, JACK leaps from the shadows and fires up into the flashlights. The policemen instinctively jump back from the opening.

The vagrants scatter like roaches.

HAP
Follow me, mister!

He leads JACK and LEENA off into the cellar darkness.

EXT- BELT FACTORY- NIGHT

A piece of plywood leaning against the building suddenly falls to one side, revealing a stairwell. The winos race from the basement, running off in all directions. HAP heads one way, but a hand on the collar pulls him another.

JACK
(tugging him)
This way, Hap!

JACK and LEENA half drag, half push the unsteady HAP across the factory lot, towards the alley where the motorbikes are stashed. WHISTLER and his men come around the corner of the factory.

HAP stumbles to the pavement. He struggles to his feet, laughing.

HAP
(with umpire's gesture)
Safe!

WHISTLER
There they are! Fire!

The officers open up with shotguns. The resounding roar is accompanied by a hail of pellets.

Holding HAP between them, JACK and LEENA run into the alley opening on the factory lot. WHISTLER and his men pursue them.

EXT- ALLEY- NIGHT

JACK and LEENA hop on the scooters and touch the ignition wires together that LEENA exposed.

JACK
(revving engine)
Let's go, Hap!

HAP
I'll ride with the lady.

Snarling, JACK reaches out and grabs HAP by his shabby lapels. He pulls the bum onto the back of the seat.

JACK
Hang on!

HAP pulls a bottle of cheap rum from his coat and hugs it tightly.

The policemen appear behind them at the mouth of the alley. As the two motor scooters take off, shots bounce from the alley walls.

WHISTLER
Get the cars!

His men rush off, leaving WHISTLER to stare malevolently at the departing bikes.

EXT- COCA COLA BUILDING- NIGHT

LEENA stops by the odd, steamship-shaped Coca Cola Bottling plant on South Central. She looks back anxiously.

JACK comes up beside her.

LEENA
Can't you go any faster?

JACK
(indicating HAP)
Not with him aboard.

HAP takes a slug from his bottle.

JACK
(cont)
We'd better split up!

HAP
Divide 'n conquer!

LEENA
You don't know your way!

A pair of squad cars, sirens blaring, whip around the corner a few blocks back.

JACK
I'll be okay- I used to swim through here!

LEENA
You what?

He speeds off, and she follows. They reach a cross street and zip away in opposite directions. The squad cars split and follow suit.

EXT- ONE-WAY STREET- NIGHT

LEENA turns a corner and tears down a narrow one way avenue, trying to loose the pursuing squad car. Two delivery vans, travelling side by side, loom up before her, blocking passage. She vainly hits the scooter horn, then glances back in time to see the police car gaining on her.

In the squad car, the two policemen are in trancer state, sweat pouring down their contorted faces.

The cop in the passenger seat leans his shotgun out the window and aims at LEENA'S back. He fires.

LEENA lurches as pellets hit her upper arm, nearly losing control of the scooter.

Gritting her teeth against the pain, LEENA steadies the bike, then centers herself between the vans. She revs the engine to full throttle.

Her bike darts between the rolling vans, stranding the squad car behind.

Finally responding to the siren, the vans start to pull over. The tranced pursuers pass partly up onto the sidewalk on the left, and swerve around the vans. LEENA is not in sight.

EXT- DEADEND ALLEY- NIGHT

LEENA stops in a dark alley and idles the engine. Wincing, she carefully opens her jacket and looks at her arm. Her blouse is spotted with blood.

EXT- BRIDGE- NIGHT

With HAP clinging desperately to his waist, JACK roars across a bridge spanning the vast Santa Fe yard. Close behind is WHISTLER'S squad car, a patrolman behind the wheel.

WHISTLER takes potshots at JACK'S bike. The slugs slam into the ornamental arches decorating the span.

JACK reaches the foot of the bridge.

JACK
Hold tight, Hap- we're rounding the bag!

HAP
Okay, coach!

JACK makes a sharp right turn, tires shreiking.

EXT- BRIDGE PYLONS- NIGHT

JACK steers the scooter between soaring support pylons under the bridge.

He glances back and doesn't see the patrol car. He grins smugly.

A shot cracks into the side of the bike. JACK looks over to see WHISTLER'S car paralleling the scooter, travelling on the dirt outside the pylons.

JACK
Okay, squids! Time out!

He reaches for the "long second" watch. He is horrified to see that his wrist is bare.

JACK makes another perilous turn, nearly spilling HAP. He races off, leaving the patrol car on the other side of the pylons.

The police car fishtails to a halt, its driver unwilling to follow JACK between the narrow pillars.

INT- WHISTLER'S CAR- NIGHT

WHISTLER
What's the matter with you? Proceed!

The driver puts the pedal to the floor.

EXT- BRIDGE PYLONS- NIGHT

The police car squeezes between the pillars, scraping off fenders, compressing doors in a cacaphony of grinding metal. The car completes its trek and continues its pursuit.

EXT- DEADEND ALLEY- NIGHT

LEENA is binding her wound with a bandage hastily fashioned from a bandanna. Using her teeth and good hand, she tightens the knot, then painfully closes her coat.

She revs up the scooter and starts out of the alley. She stops abruptly as a pair of car headlights enter the alley, facing her.

Suddenly the bank of red and yellow lights atop the squad car flash on.

The police car leaps toward her, engine growling. LEENA turns around, guns the motor, and shoots up the alley.

Within seconds, her headlight reveals that the alley has a dead end. Looming before her is the side of an apartment building.

The patrol car accelerates, gaining inexorably.

LEENA spies a small hill of trash at the alley's end, topped by an overturned couch. Directly above the heap is a wide first-floor window.

LEENA glances back once, then closes her eyes and opens the throttle.

The discarded couch acts like a ramp, propelling her through the open apartment window.

INT- APARTMENT- NIGHT

A DAPPER MAN in a lounging robe smoking a pipe is listening to Christmas carols on the radio.

He is of course astounded as LEENA and her scooter sail across his living room, slide along the rug, and crash into his tall Christmas tree.

A moment later the building rumbles, accompanied by the sound of screaming brakes and crunching steel.

Shaken but unhurt, LEENA picks up the bike. She turns to the pop-eyed man and smiles weakly.

LEENA
(trembling)
Could you get the door, please?

The man nods numbly and pulls the door open.

LEENA
(shrugging)
Ummm...Merry Christmas.

She rides the bike out the threshold and down the steps to the street.

The fellow closes the door and rushes to the window. In the alley below, he sees the wreckage of the squad car, piled up against the apartment wall. Behind the cracked windshield are the bodies of the two policemen.

A moment later, the bodies blink out in a red glowing mist.

DAPPER MAN
(shaking head)
No more eggnog, thank you.

EXT- HOLLENBECK PARK- NIGHT

With WHISTLER'S car gaining rapidly, JACK peels off the street adjacent to Hollenbeck Park, bumps over the sidewalk, and continues down into the park itself. The squad car does likewise, dogging his tail

Another shot squeezed off by WHISTLER nearly blows the seat out from under HAP.

Directly ahead is the shiny dark patch of a small lake.

JACK yanks out his revolver, turns in the seat, and fires at the squad car.

The bullet strikes the front of the car, shattering the hood lock. The hood flies up, blinding the driver.

JACK swerves around the lake. The out of control squad car plows straight ahead, nosediving into the water, where it stops dead.

JACK disappears up the empty streets. WHISTLER crawls out from the sinking car, furious beyond words.

EXT- CHINATOWN- NIGHT

JACK and HAP wheel up alongside the "Last Wave", parking the scooter where he found it. He sees that LEENA'S scooter is also back in place.

He leads HAP off towards the apartment.

JACK
You'll be safe here. Come on, I'll take you upstairs.

HAP
I don't even know yer name, buddy.

JACK
It's Deth, Jack Deth.

HAP
(confused)
Death? Upstairs? Wait a minute...

A moment later, the club door opens and JERRY strides out. The mohawked tough walks to his bike, and is shocked by the numerous bullet pocks, scratches, and dents.

JERRY
What the fuck-!

He throws his thick leg over the bike. The instant he settles into the seat, the scooter collapses in a broken heap.

INT- PUNK APARTMENT- NIGHT

JACK walks HAP into the apartment.

JACK
Leena?

He hears water running in the bathroom and crosses to it as HAP heads directly for the refrigerator.

INT- PUNK BATHROOM- NIGHT

LEENA is standing before the sink, the sleeve of her blouse torn away to reveal her wound. She is patting the blood away with a washcloth as JACK enters.

JACK
Leena?

He sees the wound and reacts. She turns and throws herself into his arms, crying. He strokes her hair soothingly.

JACK
(cont)
Okay...okay. Let me take a look.

He gently breaks the embrace and examines the wound.

JACK
(cont)
(relieved)
Just a graze. I know it hurts, but these things usually heal pretty fast.

He takes a bottle of antiseptic from the medicine chest and pours it on the washcloth.

JACK
(cont)
(swabbing the wound)
It's my fault...I shouldn't have dragged you into this.

LEENA
I do what I want, Jack. You should know that by now.

JACK
Yeah...

He turns abruptly and pounds his fist on the sink.

JACK
(cont)
Damn it.

LEENA
What's wrong?

After a moment, he faces her.

JACK
(facing her)
I had a wife in Angel City. She volunteered as trancer-bait. I figured, "Okay, it's my hunt, what could go wrong?"...I lost her, Leena. I can't let that happen again.

LEENA
You love me.

JACK
Isn't that what I just said?

She grabs him around the neck with her good arm and kisses him.

HAP
(o.s.)
Hey, coach- where's th' mustard?

INT- PUNK APT- NIGHT

JACK and LEENA come from the bathroom to find HAP constructing an enormous sandwich. Littering the table are several empty cold cut wrappers.

JACK
(sarcastic)
Make yourself at home, slugger.

HAP nods and takes a huge bite of the sandwich.

LEENA
(quietly)
Jack...do you smell something?

JACK sniffs and makes a face.

JACK
Say, Hap. How about a nice hot shower?

HAP
(around food)
Nah.

JACK
(crossing to him)
I'll give you a hand.

JACK starts to unbutton HAP'S coat. HAP recoils.

HAP
Cut it out, I got my rights!

JACK
So do we.

He and LEENA each grab a sleeve of HAP'S coat and pull it off him.

JACK
(cont)
(seizing HAP'S wrist)
Hey!

Climbing up HAP'S arm is a line of watches- including the "long second" device. JACK strips off the watch.

HAP
Oh, that...sorry, pally. Ya might as well take this, too.

He tosses JACK Dethton's wallet.

HAP
(cont)
Now, lemme eat.

HAP sits at the table and reaches for the sandwich.

JACK yanks him from the chair and slams him against the wall.

JACK
Lifting that watch could've killed us, hop-head! We're in the heat, and if you want to stay alive, you'll have to play ball with me!

HAP
Easy, mister, I'm just a bum-

JACK
You are now. But I'm your fortune teller, Hap. You're gonna dry out, get a job, meet a girl, and have a kid. His descendant will be one of the great leaders of the Twenty-Third Century. And it all starts with you in the tub.

He and LEENA drag HAP off towards the bathroom.

INT- PUNK BATHROOM- NIGHT

JACK sits HAP in the bathtub, clothes and all.

LEENA
He didn't understand a word you said.

JACK
Sure he did.

JACK turns on the water full blast. The shower head sprays on the sputtering HAP.

INT- PUNK APARTMENT- NIGHT

JACK is holding the telephone. He calls the operator.

JACK
(into phone)
Operator, get me the police- Parker Center.

LEENA comes from the bathroom.

LEENA
(into bathroom)
I'll find you some towels.

She starts for the closet, then sees JACK on the phone.

LEENA
Who're you calling?

JACK
(ignoring her, into phone)
Lt. Wiesling, please. Tell him it's Deth calling...he'll know.

LEENA
Jack, what're you doing?

JACK
(to LEENA)
Quiet.
(into phone)
Whistler? I want to make a deal. I'm tired of chasing you, tired of the whole business. So I'm getting out. You can have Angel City and everything else down the line. All I want is the girl.

LEENA
Jack, don't do this!

JACK
(to LEENA)
Shut up!
(into phone)
Give me my life with her, and you can have Hap Ashby.

LEENA grabs his arm, pleading.

LEENA
What? You can't! Please, Jack!

JACK
(into phone)
Yeah. Chinatown....you'll see me.

He hangs up. He turns to LEENA. She backs away, shaking.

JACK
Leena-

LEENA
Don't touch me! You'd let that poor man be murdered!

JACK
Relax, it's over. You played it just right.

LEENA
(warily)
That was a trick?

JACK
Sure.

She eyes him suspiciously.

JACK
(cont)
I'm doing my job. Trust me.

EXT- CHINATOWN ROOF- NIGHT

LEENA crouches at the edge of a Chinatown roof, looking down with a small pair of binoculars. Seated on a lone bench in the deserted square below her is JACK, his back to her, his trenchcoat collar pulled up against the damp December night.

LEENA nervously checks her watch. She scans the wet neon-washed streets from her vantage point. The city below her is quiet and empty.

Suddenly a large hand reaches up behind her, clamping around her mouth and pulling her back, violently. The cold barrel of a police revolver digs into the base of her neck. A low, sinister chuckle hisses in her ear.

WHISTLER
Call to him.

She shakes her head. WHISTLER twists his fingers in her hair and tugs hard.

WHISTLER
Now!

LEENA
(calling down)
Jack!

EXT- COURTYARD- NIGHT

The trenchcoated figure turns and waves up to the roof. It is HAP ASHBY.

HAP
Hiya!

EXT- CHINATOWN ROOF- NIGHT

Laughing maniacally, WHISTLER points his revolver at HAP.

WHISTLER
Perfect.

He starts squeezing off shots.

EXT- COURTYARD- NIGHT

With surprising speed, the frantic HAP zigzags across the courtyard as bullets tear chunks from the pavement around him.

He ends his run at a large open dumpster and dives in as a slug rips into the metal.

EXT- CHINATOWN ROOF- NIGHT

WHISTLER starts as the roof gravel crunches behind him, as if a man has jumped from a neighboring rooftop.

He turns to find JACK a few paces away, pistol extended.

JACK
Gun's empty, Whistler. That was eight shots.

LEENA
No- seven!

JACK'S jaw drops. WHISTLER fires. JACK dives and tucks into a role as the bullet screams overhead.

Before JACK can recover, WHISTLER suddenly whirls LEENA about and presses his brow into the nape of her neck. LEENA cries out as WHISTLER uses the full power of his mind energy on her.

LEENA
(cont)
(very weak)
Jack...

As JACK picks himself up, a look of horror comes over him.

Drained, WHISTLER steps back and releases the tranced LEENA.

WHISTLER
Embrace your love, Jack Deth!

The trancer snarls and charges JACK. WHISTLER dashes for a fat chimney pipe. JACK fires a single shot, misses- and LEENA is upon him, knocking him down.

Kneeling on his chest, LEENA digs her fingers into JACK'S throat, squeezing the breath from him.

Safe behind the chimney pipe, WHISTLER reloads his .38.

JACK is unable to dislodge the trancer. His face turns red as he struggles in vain for air. He feels himself losing consciousness.
With his last shred of strength, he brings his gun up level with LEENA'S head. The pain of his decision shows in his eyes.

WHISTLER
(calling out)
Careful, Trooper! You know what happens when you kill your ancestor.

JACK hesitates, stunned.

WHISTLER
(cont)
Didn't you know? Oh, yes, Dethton marries the girl. Or, would have, if she had lived.

LEENA snatches the gun from JACK weakened grasp and flings it over the edge of the roof.

WHISTLER steps out from around the pipe, training the reloaded gun on JACK.

LEENA abruptly releases her stanglehold and stands up, leaving JACK gasping.

WHISTLER
(cont)
And now, you shall watch yourself die.

LEENA walks to the edge of the roof and steps off.

As she disappears, JACK hits the "long second" on his wrist. The world becomes silent, frozen.

He lurches to his feet and staggers to the edge, looking down. LEENA is hanging in midair, in the midst of a death drop to the pavement.

JACK leaps from the roof, grabbing hold of a heavy cable strung with Chinese lanterns.

The cable snaps behind him as he swings across the gulf between buildings. He catches LEENA'S suspended form, plucks it from the air, and lands safely on the ground.

EXT- COURTYARD- NIGHT

He gently sets LEENA'S motionless body on the courtyard bench as the "long second" ticks down.

Nearby, HAP can be seen standing in the dumpster, a wine bottle raised above his mouth, the pouring liquid a frozen stream.

JACK stands over the tranced girl.

JACK
(frantic)
Leena...Leena! Whistler's frozen, his power's shut down...Snap out of it!
(inspired)
Wait!

He yanks the "long second" from his wrist. As he places it on hers, he freezes.

LEENA'S features return to normal as the trance is broken.

EXT- CHINATOWN ROOF- NIGHT

The "long second runs down.

WHISTLER looks about in confusion.

EXT- COURTYARD- NIGHT

HAP climbs from the dumpster, the wine bottle in his hand. Puzzled, he sees JACK holding the detranced LEENA in his arms. HAP catches sight of WHISTLER, who is standing at the roof edge, preparing to shoot JACK through the back.

HAP goes into his windup and pitches the bottle straight at WHISTLER.

EXT- CHINATOWN ROOF- NIGHT

The bottle strikes flat on the side of his head. Stunned, he looses his footing and stumbles over the edge.

At the last second, WHISTLER grabs the rain gutter, leaving him dangling high above the courtyard.

EXT- COURTYARD- NIGHT

JACK and LEENA look up at the hanging WHISTLER. Glancing about, JACK spies his revolver lying on the pavement. He grabs it up and takes aim at his nemesis.

Before he can fire, a second wine bottle sails through the air, crashing on WHISTLER'S clinging hands.

Crying out, WHISTLER plummets from the roof, landing on his back in a large ornamental fishpond.

With LEENA following, JACK runs to the pond and sloshes into knee-deep water. He stands over the dazed WHISTLER, revolver in hand.

WHISTLER
(laughing weakly)
You wouldn't murder an innocent man...
Wiesling has six children.

JACK
I'd love to blow you to fish food, but I made other plans. You're going back up the line- with no stops. You've got no flesh in Angel City- I singed it.

He slides open the gun grip and takes out a time serum antidote injector. He finds the vial cracked- and empty of fluid.

JACK
Damn it!

LEENA
What's wrong?

JACK shows her the broken vial.

JACK
I had two shots of antidote. One for Whistler...and one for me.

WHISTLER laughs gleefully as JACK removes the second, intact vial. JACK holds the antidote in his palm- then makes his decision.

He jabs the injector into the neck of the astonished WHISTLER.

JACK
(cont)
Destination- limbo.

WHISTLER
(body jerking)
Ahhhhh-

As JACK and LEENA look on in amazement a stream of luminous green vapor dances from WHISTLER'S forehead and disipates in the night air. His cry of despair fades into oblivion.

HAP staggers up, looking up into the sky at the last tendrils of the green vapor.

HAP
What the hell...?

LT WIESLING comes to in the fish pond, and glances about, stupified.

WIESLING
Where am I?

JACK
Hap, give him a hand.

HAP climbs into the pond and helps the mystified WIESLING to his feet.

LEENA
Jack...?

JACK
(putting an arm around her)
Come on.

He walks her off across the courtyard.

WIESLING
Who <u>is</u> that man?

HAP
A fortune teller.

JACK and LEENA walk beneath the strings of colored lanterns.

LEENA
But, Jack, you can't get home now. What'll you do? You're stranded...

JACK
That's okay.

He stops and takes her in his arms.

JACK
(cont)
I kinda like it here.

He kisses her. As a breeze drifts through the wet Chinatown streets, the paper lanterns sway, and wind chimes sing.

THE END